



Catholicism and Judaism in the Catholic Defence against Alfred Rosenberg, 1934–1938: Anti-Jewish Images in an Age of Race Science

Ulrike Ehret

University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany

ABSTRACT

This article examines the images of Jews and Judaism in the popular Catholic defence against Alfred Rosenberg's anticlericalism and 'neo-paganism' between 1934 and 1938. It contributes to the debate on Catholic attitudes to Jews, and National Socialist anti-Semitism and racism during the Third Reich. Looking at the grassroots level of this defence, the article demonstrates how the hierarchy communicated traditional religious views on Jews and Judaism to a Catholic public, taking into account the restrictions imposed by a dictatorial regime as well as long-held anti-Jewish attitudes in German Catholicism. The article suggests that the popular literature clung to traditional creeds and values of the Catholic Church and defended biblical Jewry. Yet, at the same time, the defence was clad in the language of the time and consequently used images of Jews closer to National Socialist racial rhetoric. Taking the restrictions of the dictatorship into account, the article argues that this is to a considerable extent the result of the authors of the popular Church literature and the German bishops who failed to acknowledge that it was no longer possible to distinguish between a 'good' Jew and a 'degenerate' Jew in the face of the Third Reich's sweeping anti-Semitism and its core ideology that made no distinction between racial and religious Jewishness.

KEY WORDS: anti-Semitism, Catholic Church and National Socialism, Church Struggle, neo-paganism

In January 1934, Alfred Rosenberg was appointed the Führer's Delegate for the Entire Intellectual and Philosophical Education and Instruction of the National Socialist Party. Theoretically, this office granted Rosenberg the power to shape youth education as it was offered at training courses of party organizations according to the worldview he had set out in his main ideological work *The Myth of the Twentieth Century* (1930). The Vatican promptly responded to this appointment by placing Rosenberg's *Myth of the Twentieth Century* on the index of forbidden books shortly

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after Pius XI had sent a *Promemoria* to Hitler in January 1934 protesting against the party's ambition to demand not just a totalitarian state, but absolute conformity to its ideology.¹

The argument between the Christian churches and Alfred Rosenberg, which revolved around Rosenberg's main ideological work *The Myth of the Twentieth Century*, has traditionally been interpreted as a clash of two worldviews with both sides laying an absolute claim on the human mind.² The *Myth* described world history as nothing but the history of races. Rosenberg's 'myth of the blood' claimed superiority over 'the ancient sacraments', and declared Judaism and Christianity mortal enemies of the Teutonic soul. Rosenberg fantasized about a new 'Aryan' Christ, a 'slim, tall, blond' saviour of northern Europe. Led by such a figure, he proposed, Christianity could be reformed if it rid itself of its 'Judeo-Roman infections', which meant nothing less than the end of the Christian churches and the rejection of the Old Testament.³ This clash was a sub-chapter of the 'Church Struggle', the attempt of the Christian churches to fend off the totalitarian claim of National Socialism. However, the anticlerical campaigns of fervent National Socialists also provoked recurring comments on the relationship between Catholicism and Judaism as the Church tried to rebut the accusation of 'jewification' (*Verjudung*). Catholic authors and Church institutions responded to these challenges with fairly systematic expositions on Catholicism's relationship to Judaism and in passing comments on the 'Jewish question'. This is remarkable as the Church in Germany tended to skirt any public statement that referred to the 'Jewish question'. The German Catholic hierarchy was more likely to oppose the regime whenever Catholic theology or ecclesiastical institutions were attacked, because the bishops believed that these spheres were legally (according to the 1933 Concordat between Hitler and the Vatican) and legitimately under their authority.⁴

Research has traditionally been very critical of the responses of the Catholic Church to the persecution of the Jews. The failure to criticize this persecution publicly has been attributed either to ideological affinities, in particular to Catholic anti-Semitism, or to structural restraints imposed by the dictatorial regime. Apart from direct repression, historians have also referred to the intransigence of the regime regarding anti-Semitism as one of the core elements of its ideology, or to the Concordat that excluded any direct political resistance on the part of the bishops.⁵

The historiography on the defence against Rosenberg has evolved along similar debates. Yet historians have seen these events more readily as an instance of resistance and to a lesser degree as an occasion where the Church spoke out in defence of the Jews.⁶ The Protestant Church historian Klaus Scholder, for instance, interpreted the defence as a passive refusal of the Christian churches to follow Hitler in his racial anti-Semitism. They might have clung to their transmitted creed, but in Scholder's eyes, this was enough to call the pervasiveness of the National Socialist worldview into question.⁷ Otto Dov Kulka on the other hand was more critical in his assessment of the Christian churches. He felt that the churches mainly complained about Rosenberg and his neo-paganism. Their defence was a defence of the Old

Testament and the biblical Jews, but did not expressly relate to Rosenberg's anti-Semitism or the persecution of the Jews.⁸ Others are even more critical and conclude that despite their opposition to National Socialism, Christian resisters transmitted concepts of Jews and Judaism that did little to ameliorate, and often exacerbated the anti-Semitic climate in interwar Germany.⁹ With respect to the Church's potential to mobilize popular dissent, recent studies also take into account the strained position of the German Catholic clergy in the Third Reich where they faced both a hostile regime and the erosion of the Catholic social and cultural milieu. This emasculated position, it is suggested, undermined any attempts at effective resistance.¹⁰ While such a context makes the ambivalences in Catholic resistance methods more comprehensible, the question of whether this ambivalence grew out of an ideological affinity to the new government, in particular out of Catholic anti-Jewish sentiments, often remains unanswered.

Olaf Blaschke, for example, has little doubt that a long-standing Catholic anti-Semitism contributed considerably to the indifference with which Catholics witnessed the persecution of the Jews in the 1930s and 1940s.¹¹ Important in his eyes was the ubiquity and longevity of anti-Jewish discourse amongst German Catholics since the nineteenth century that, although not as vehement as that of the anti-Semites of the time, still included anti-Jewish stereotypes from the religious motif of the Jews as Christ-killers to the more modern images of Jews as ravenous financiers and degenerate foreigners. The historian of German Catholicism, Margaret Anderson, has criticized Blaschke for not paying sufficient attention to changes over time in the intensity of Catholic Jew-hatred which was less frequent and hostile in Weimar Germany and the 1930s than it had been in the 1870s.¹² Although Anderson's criticism is valid, much of Blaschke's analysis of Catholic anti-Semitism is relevant to the Catholic literature of the 1930s, in particular the habit of distinguishing between 'good' and 'degenerate' Jews (more pronounced than the call for a 'legitimate' anti-Semitism). At the same time, Anderson's advice to consider Catholic anti-Semitism in the context of Catholic life of the time needs to be taken into account for a study of Catholic attitudes towards Jews in National Socialist Germany – a time when the need to fend off anticlerical anti-Semitism was more acute than it had been in Bismarck's Germany.

This article examines the discourse on the relationship between Christianity and Judaism as it unfolded in two popular educational pamphlets against Rosenberg's ideology: the *Katechismuswahrheiten* (Truths of the Catechism) and the *Nathanaelfrage* (Nathanael's Question).¹³ The defence literature is set in its contemporary political context reflecting the motivation behind it, the circumstances under which the literature was drafted and distributed as well as the situation of the Jews and the Catholic Church in Germany between 1934 and 1938. The aim is to analyse the extent to which this discourse did or did not offer a defence of Germany's Jews.

The two pamphlets, the *Katechismuswahrheiten* and the *Nathanaelfrage*, are a valuable source for an enquiry into Catholic attitudes to Jews and Judaism during the Third Reich. They are examples of the few systematic and yet popular expositions

on Christianity's relationship with Jews and Judaism, and National Socialist race ideology at a time when public debate on the 'Jewish question' had already ceased. Both publications were designed to reach a wide audience due to their simple language and low price, their door-to-door distribution and their use in religious instruction.¹⁴ The *Katechismuswahrheiten*, for instance, achieved a circulation of five to six million in 1937, which was 10 times higher than the circulation of the learned anti-Rosenberg literature.¹⁵ The two pamphlets were written and disseminated by the Defence Bureau against Anti-Christian Propaganda (*Abwehrstelle gegen die nationalsozialistische antichristliche Propaganda*) in Düsseldorf, an institution close to the German hierarchy and central to the Catholic publication campaign against Rosenberg. The Defence Bureau was set up by Cardinal Karl Joseph Schulte of Cologne in March 1934 and was managed by Vicar Josef Teusch.¹⁶ It was Teusch's office that first started the broader defence work against Rosenberg. It was also the source of one of the best-known defence publications at the time, *Studies on The Myth of the Twentieth Century* (*Studien zum Mythos des XX. Jahrhunderts*).¹⁷ Its publications were backed by Cardinal Schulte and the German bishops and had thus the consent of the highest level of the ecclesiastical leadership in Germany.¹⁸ This popular literature was meant to provide a direct communication link from the hierarchy to ordinary Catholics, in particular to those Catholics who were wooed by both the Church and National Socialism, the young. The *Katechismuswahrheiten* was primarily written for children, and the *Nathanaelfrage* addressed Catholic students and young adults.¹⁹ Both booklets thus represent the views and values the leadership of the Catholic Church in Germany wanted to convey to their community (more so than the learned literature by Catholic theologians and writers, which also tends to reflect the authors' individual attitudes).

This article then contributes to the debate on Catholic attitudes to Jews, National Socialist anti-Semitism and racism during the Third Reich. Looking at the grassroots level of the defence, it demonstrates how the defence against Rosenberg, and with it the Church's views on Jews and Judaism, were communicated to a Catholic public. The article offers an exposition on the role of traditional Catholic anti-Jewish sentiments in an age of race science, taking into account the structural limitations of a dictatorship as well as the ideological legacy of German Catholicism. It shows how this popular literature clung to the traditional creed and values of the Catholic Church and defended biblical Jewry, but clad this defence in contemporary language. The images of the Jews were consequently closer to National Socialist racial rhetoric than appeared in the established learned literature. Rather than rejecting anti-Semitism, this popular literature perpetuated the contemporary secular images of the Jews as Bolsheviks and 'degenerate' aliens, and left the regime's racial definition of Jews unchallenged. The bishops and authors of the literature failed to see that it was no longer possible to distinguish between 'good' and 'bad' Jews in the face of National Socialism's rigid and determined anti-Semitism as the Church had done for the past decades in defence against anticlerical and anti-Semitic movements.

Rosenberg, the Catholic Church and National Socialism: Problems of the anti-Rosenberg Defence

Historians have often insisted that the churches fought a phantom in Rosenberg and his *Myth*, since neither the man nor the book was widely influential.²⁰ Despite Rosenberg's known opposition to the Christian churches, he had no authority to shape the Reich's church policy nor did he participate in the regime's political anticlerical measures.²¹ Even when given political power (e.g. as Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories from 17 July 1941), Rosenberg was not the shrewd politician to prevail over his competitors (particularly Josef Goebbels, Heinrich Himmler or Reinhard Heydrich) within Hitler's leadership. Yet he was not simply 'Almost Rosenberg' as his rival Goebbels sarcastically described him, as the man who 'almost managed to become a scholar, a journalist, a politician, but only almost'.²² However, Ernst Piper forcefully argues that Rosenberg's influence on the ideological indoctrination of Germany's youth, army and regional political leadership should not be underestimated. Rosenberg remained at the centre of Hitler's circle of loyal followers, his position surpassed only by Himmler, Goebbels and Goering. More important, however, was his influence on National Socialist ideology and its anti-Semitism.²³ In his position as guardian of National Socialist ideology he was on a par with Himmler and Goebbels – something that both Rosenberg's contemporaries as well as the judges at the Nuremberg Trials acknowledged.²⁴ Despite the lack of an institutional power base, Rosenberg's role as enforcer of National Socialist ideology was supported by Hermann Göring, Baldur von Schirach of the Hitler Youth, and the majority of the regional party leadership (*Gauleiter*), particularly in Catholic regions.²⁵ The *Myth* remained on the reading list of National Socialist training courses and reports on these courses confirmed the use of anti-Semitic and anticlerical literature.²⁶ It was in his position as the Führer's Delegate with responsibility for Ideological Education and Instruction that the churches feared Rosenberg's work most.²⁷ In addition, the timing of Rosenberg's elevation to the post of the party's chief ideologue was inopportune for the ongoing negotiations between the Reich, the bishops and the Vatican on the status and independence of Catholic lay organizations as set out in the Reich Concordat.²⁸

Intention and Reality of Ecclesiastic Defence Strategies

Throughout the Third Reich, the German Catholic hierarchy upheld their view of an embattled Church that was threatened from an anticlerical state on one side and that, at the same time, had lost its popular support through the erosion of the Catholic milieu. This vision hardly reflected the real state of German Catholicism in 1934, but it guided the bishops in their general defence strategy against National Socialism and against Rosenberg in particular.²⁹ Three months after Rosenberg's appoint-

ment as the guardian of National Socialist ideology and education, the German bishops decided at the Fulda Bishops' Conference in June 1934 that they would confront Rosenberg's ideology in complaints to state representatives and address its fallacy in the distribution of anti-Rosenberg literature.³⁰ For the time being, the German bishops, like the Vatican, placed greater hope in the efficacy of a broad and intense educational campaign that highlighted Rosenberg's errors and explained the relationship between Christianity and Judaism.³¹ Pastoral letters were to address the public and emphasize the necessity of Christian education particularly among youth organizations. Sermons strongly condemned the anti-Christian ideology of Rosenberg and the advance of neo-heathendom in the years up to 1938. This education was to be supported by suitable pamphlets and lectures.

Catholic defence literature was not officially outlawed nor was it systematically censored.³² After all, Hitler did not want to antagonize public opinion with all too overt anticlerical laws before and during the war. But the bishops and the clergy had to cope with considerable handicaps in their defence strategy, as the authorities found subtle and arbitrary ways to cut off the communication channels of the Church. The Church hierarchy's struggle was ultimately with a National Socialist ideological reality where their own presence and teaching was crowded out of the public sphere, and where they feared to lose their influence at the grassroots level over their own communities. Even before the conflict over Rosenberg broke out in 1934, the public sphere of German Catholicism had already been significantly limited in the first instance by the Concordat that sacrificed political Catholicism to the ambitions of Vatican foreign policy. The dense network of Catholic associations and publications that had confidently taken up any argument with the *völkisch* anticlerical right in Weimar Germany was subsequently dismantled or 'co-ordinated'. The loss of this loyal network became even more obvious at the time the *Katechismuswahrheiten* were published in September 1936, when the regime's co-ordination drive and the determination to de-confessionalize public life threatened the existence of Catholic schools and the remaining social associations, in particular the Catholic youth.³³ At the time the *Nathanaelfrage* was published in 1938, the Catholic Church in Germany was ill-equipped to take up this challenge partly because of the regime's repression of Catholic social institutions and partly because of the bishops' accommodating defence strategy from 1936. Centred around parish-based lay activity rather than youth groups, it discouraged communal gatherings and instead emphasized religious activities, the value of the Catholic family and the Catholic mission.³⁴ With a shrinking public sphere the freedom to communicate directly and thus effectively with their community was likewise curtailed. What remained of the Catholic press, largely religious publications and diocesan or parish-based news bulletins under the protection of the bishops, had to face increasing if arbitrary restrictions in the form of temporary bans, confiscation of the printed material or closure of print shops.³⁵

Considering these gradual encroachments of the National Socialist state, the churches' struggle against Rosenberg did not take place in an unimpeded field,

even if it was largely ignored by the National Socialist leadership. The Catholic Church in Germany (like the Protestant churches) had to distribute its defence literature and engage with its community in an ever contracting public zone. The initially strong circulation of the defence literature, often in its tens of thousands for single publications, had to be cut down on occasions to only a tenth of the original circulation because of interruptions to the printing process.³⁶ The Catholic Church managed to circumvent these obstacles with some success by producing shorter, more succinct popular versions of the defence literature and by finding new ways of distributing their communications. The production and dissemination of the *Katechismuswahrheiten* and *Nathanaelfrage* are representative examples of the length the clergy had to go to protect their publications, often staying only a small step ahead of the authorities. Because of the anticipated censorship by the government, the *Katechismuswahrheiten*, for example, was distributed at church doors, and the *Nathanaelfrage* was sent to parish priests who were instructed to hand out the booklet after mass inside the church to stave off confiscation as long as possible. This is in itself symbolic of how small the public space for Catholic publications had become, literally shrunk to the sanctity of the church building. Despite these precautions, a printed set of the *Katechismuswahrheiten* was confiscated at the print shop in Bad Godesberg in November 1936. In a letter to the Reich Ministry for Church Affairs, Teusch's office remained defiant, claiming that up to that point millions of booklets had already been distributed and that Catholics would be instructed according to its content even after its repression.³⁷ Yet half a year later, in March and May 1937, despite Goebbels' initial guarantee not to impede the distribution of the *Katechismuswahrheiten*, the Gestapo seized further sets in Breslau and Osnabrück on the grounds that the pamphlets conflicted with National Socialist ideology and 'glorif[ied] the Jewish race'.³⁸ Following further complaints by Cardinal Bertram and Bishop Berning of Osnabrück, the Gestapo finally shut down the centre of the bishops' defence strategy, the Defence Bureau against Anti-Christian Propaganda, on 3 January 1938 and arrested its members.³⁹

The Motivation behind the Popular Literature

Considering the declining circulation of the learned anti-Rosenberg literature from the mid-1930s, the bishops felt that the Church needed more popular defence literature to educate ordinary Catholics on the question of Christianity's Jewish roots. They hoped that this education would prevent more Catholics falling for National Socialist anticlerical claims. Together with the Archdiocese of Cologne, Josef Teusch created and distributed the *Katechismuswahrheiten* and the *Nathanaelfrage* that should serve as such a 'guard' against the 'propaganda of unbelief' among Catholics.⁴⁰ The aim of the bishops to awaken Catholics to the encroaching danger of what they saw as anti-Christian paganism, and to insulate them against the increasing anticlerical propaganda was exclaimed in an early paragraph of the *Katechismuswahrheiten*:

There are those who seek to transfer the aversion that has been shown towards the Jews for racial reasons onto Christ, because he had been born into their people (*dem Fleische nach hervorgegangen*). Preachers of a new anti-Christian worldview increasingly reveal themselves as glowing Christ-haters. Christ is about to be expelled from our fatherland. Christian men and women, the enemies of Christ have to be ruined by our loyalty to Christ! Avoid their company! Do not read their newspapers! ... Declare yourself a proud disciple of Christ!⁴¹

The primary aim of protecting Christian teaching is also apparent in the instructions given out by Teusch's office to parish priests on how to use the booklets in pastoral care and religious education. Two messages should receive central attention therein. First, there was only one true faith, Catholicism, and thus the erroneous writings of Rosenberg, Erich Ludendorff and the *Deutsche Glaubensbewegung* of Wilhelm Hauer (1881–1962; professor of religious studies in Marburg and Tübingen) had to be resisted. Second, Christianity was not a Jewish religion.

Teusch's work has been seen as an expression of sympathy for the Jews and has been credited as a courageous stand against the racist anti-Semitism of the regime.⁴² There is no doubt that the Catholic anti-Rosenberg literature was meant to defend the Church and Christianity against the anticlerical campaigns of the regime, but to what extent did it criticize the regime's anti-Semitism and thus defend Germany's Jews? Indeed, the Cologne diocese hoped the *Nathanaelfrage* could encourage discussions with Catholics who were prejudiced on the question of how Christianity and Judaism relate to each other.⁴³ This was a particularly delicate task, according to vicar general Emmerich David (1882–1952) in Cologne, because it was entangled in a widespread mixture of prejudice, personal predispositions and polemics.⁴⁴ It is possible to read a desire into this statement to counter the indiscriminate anti-Semitism of the time, but David continued by saying that the *Nathanaelfrage* would be particularly suited to disentangle this web of prejudices and polemics because it distinguished between the historical and causal relationship between Christianity and Judaism. According to David, this approach allowed the links between the two to be highlighted and 'effectively to invalidate the accusation of an inherent dependence of Christianity on Judaism'.⁴⁵ The reason for tackling this particular question was the assumption that some Catholics believed that anti-Semitism without anticlericalism would obstruct the national revolution that National Socialism had begun in Germany.⁴⁶ The booklets meant to reject the kind of anti-Semitism that threatened the Church and the Christian faith, but not Jew-hatred in general. The following pages discuss how this defence was constructed and how the relationship between Christianity and Judaism was justified.

Christianity and Judaism in the *Katechismuswahrheiten* and *Nathanaelfrage*

The argument of these brochures was in many ways modelled on the 1933 Advent sermons by Cardinal Michael Faulhaber, Archbishop of Munich and Freising. Faulhaber's sermons were the first instance where a member of the German religious hierarchy had taken up the struggle with Rosenberg's 'neo-paganism' in public. They were then the best-known defence of the Old Testament and explanation of the relationship between Judaism, Christianity and Germandom.⁴⁷ Faulhaber was well suited as an advocate for the Old Testament as he had held a chair in Old Testament exegesis at the University of Strasbourg. In his scholarship, Faulhaber had also shown sympathy for Judaism. Like Cardinal Karl Schulte of Cologne and founder of the Defence Bureau in Düsseldorf, he supported the Jewish convert Sophie van Leer and *Amici Israel*, an organization that worked towards a better understanding between Jews and Catholics in the hope to further Jewish conversion to Catholicism.⁴⁸ However, Faulhaber displayed a more ambivalent attitude towards secular Jews and the 'Jewish question' which he had linked to the rise of Bolshevism in Europe – a distinction he upheld in his Advent sermons.⁴⁹ In the introduction to their 1934 publication, Faulhaber neither denied the Jewish origin of Jesus Christ nor did he completely divorce Christianity from its Jewish roots. Yet he distinguished between a god-fearing and a cursed Jewish people who had crucified Christ. Faulhaber emphasized that he was only speaking of the 'Chosen People' in his sermons.⁵⁰ The sermons have since been celebrated as a critique of National Socialism and the anti-Jewish policy of the regime, but they are only this to a limited extent. Faulhaber's criticism was largely aimed at the anticlericalism within National Socialism, the exultation of a national God and the regime's excessive racial hatred. At the same time, he insisted that the Church was not opposed to an 'honest race science' that did not incite hatred against other peoples or preach against Christianity.⁵¹ Faulhaber's rejection of a national God and idolatry of race, the insistence on Christ's Jewish origin and the historical link between Judaism and Christianity were part of the *Katechismuswahrheiten* and *Nathanaelfrage*, as was the distinction between Jews as the 'chosen' and the 'cursed' people and an ambivalence towards race science. Yet there are differences in form and language between an archbishop's sermon and popular defence literature.

Furthermore, it is notable that the *Katechismuswahrheiten* and *Nathanaelfrage* were published two and four years after Faulhaber's original 1933 Advent sermons, when the Church's position in German society had been notably curtailed by the regime. The bishops sought an effective insulation against the encroachment of their community by National Socialist ideology. Cardinal Schulte had a clear idea of how this should be achieved:

one ought to deploy a better, a forceful, well-thought-through counter-propaganda ... If they constantly use the same catchy phrases to spread

anti-Christian ideas, we too should not ignore the effect that short, clear expressions of our Faith have on the psyche of our people.⁵²

The form of the *Katechismuswahrheiten* followed the question–answer pattern of a catechism, while its terminology reflected that of Rosenberg’s *Myth*.⁵³ It focused on biblical phrases that spoke positively of ancient Jewry, for example of their status as God’s chosen people or that salvation would come from the Jews. These and similar biblical quotes had been used for years by National Socialist propaganda to ‘prove’ on one hand that Christianity was essentially Jewish. On the other hand, they also ‘attested’ to the eternal ‘satanic’ character of the Jews, using the very authority of Christianity, the Bible, as proof. The central purpose of the *Katechismuswahrheiten* was therefore to explain such phrases and to justify the relationship between Christianity and Judaism. Its main argument intended to instruct the reader that ‘Christianity has never been a Jewish religion’.⁵⁴ It was a deliberate and intelligent fusion of Rosenberg’s racial outlook and Catholic religious dogma: the faithful were called on to recognize Rosenberg’s errors in his own terminology, while the choice of the catechism as the overarching framework made clear where the truth was to be found.

As popular literature the *Nathanaelfrage* and *Katechismuswahrheiten* had to spread the word, literally. Teusch’s office did not design this literature in the pious but probably futile hope that Catholics would read and understand the information as intended by its authors. To ensure this, the popular literature had to achieve the transition from the written to the spoken word, for example in sermons or discussions in the classroom or youth club. Looking at Teusch’s detailed instructions one can assume that the negative images of the Jews were not lost in the transition to the spoken word. On the contrary, they most likely acquired a more populist and secular air. For example, when teachers were advised to lecture on the ‘greatest sin of the Jewish people’, Teusch suggested they should explain that the Jews rejected Christ because they expected him to liberate their people, to lead them to grandeur and wealth and to subjugate other peoples.⁵⁵

The aim of explaining the relationship between Christianity and Judaism was central to both booklets and both repeated the key argument again and again: Christianity and Judaism share a common historical background, but Christianity did not develop out of Judaism. It was new and of divine origin. As in the learned literature and in Faulhaber’s sermons, the argument was built on the distinction between biblical and modern Jewry:

It should be stressed from the beginning that in our religious education we do not refer to ... those often degenerate (*entartete*) Jews who today live dispersed all over the world, but to the Jews of the Old Union (*Alten Bundes*) who lived as a unified people in their own state in Palestine until they were expelled from their fatherland by the Romans in 70 AC. Not their race, but their religion is important in our explanation.⁵⁶

Moreover, unlike Faulhaber in his 1933 Advent sermons, the booklets did comment on modern Jewry in a negative way.⁵⁷ The *Katechismuswahrheiten*, for example, conjured up a clear link between modern and ancient Jewry when it tried to diffuse the anticlerical claim of an alleged collusion between the Church and Jewry. It argued that Jewish hostility towards Christians pre-empted any collaboration between the two. The same hostility, the *Kathechismuswahrheiten* continued, could be witnessed in Communist Russia. 'Wherever they [Jews] have gained power, they have oppressed Christianity as it happens today in Bolshevik Russia which is ruled by a great majority of godless Jews'.⁵⁸

The pamphlet essentially insinuated a broad continuity of Jewish hostility, deducing the negative characteristics of modern Jewry from the biblical 'cursed' Jews that had allegedly remained unchanged throughout the centuries, and endorsed the Jewish-Bolshevik slogans of the National Socialist regime. 'Theologically sound' claims such as the deicide paradigm and the fall from the chosen to the cursed people often provided the link between the two. The reason for including a warning against the dangers of Bolshevism was most likely an attempt to emphasize the Church's traditional opposition to Bolshevism and to refute National Socialist allegations that Jews, Bolsheviks and Catholics (Jesuits) conspired against the German nation. Only two months after the publication of the *Katechismuswahrheiten*, the bishops of the western dioceses decided to expand the anti-Bolshevism theme in an additional booklet.⁵⁹ Such an argument was not just a strategic adaptation of state-dictated ideology, but had its roots in anti-Bolshevik and anti-Jewish views common in Europe after the First World War.⁶⁰ Occasionally, the impression of a powerful Jewish opposition against Christian interests was also able to influence the decisions of the German Catholic hierarchy. For example, when the bishops discussed how they should respond to the National Socialist boycott of Jewish businesses in April 1933, Cardinal Bertram offered for consideration that the media, 'overwhelmingly in Jewish hands', had so far failed to condemn the persecution of Catholics in various countries.⁶¹ Cardinal Faulhaber was confident that the Jewish community wielded enough power to help themselves.⁶²

The Relationship of Christians and Jews in a Racialized Discourse

When the *Katechismuswahrheiten* felt in 1936 that it had to explain the relationship between Christianity and Judaism at a time when 'the racial and *völkisch* context receive[d] more attention than before', this context was certainly even more manifest two years later when the *Nathanaelfrage* was published.⁶³ Meanwhile, the 1935 Nuremberg Laws had deprived German Jews of their civil rights on the basis of their 'race'. The Protestant churches fought about a 'Jewish' or an 'Aryan' Christ. 'Race' and Christ's racial origin were consequently discussed in more detail in the *Nathanaelfrage*. It offered its own answers to questions such as whether Christ was

an 'Aryan' and anti-Semite, why the Church baptized Jews and whether the Church was linked to international Jewry.

Writing on 'race' and 'race science', the *Nathanaelfrage* interpreted 'race' according to the evolutionary theory of the French naturalist Jean Baptiste Pierre Antoine de Monet Chevalier de Lamarck (1744–1829). In contrast to the biological determination of physical and mental characteristics in racial hygiene, Lamarck proposed that racial characteristics were acquired through historical, social and religious traditions – an interpretation the Catholic Church had taken up since the late nineteenth century. Similar to the general announcements of the Church on race science, the *Nathanaelfrage* skirted the question of whether National Socialist race policies were legitimate when it asserted that it was not the duty of the Church to educate the people in (race) hygiene, eugenics or biology. Nevertheless, pointing towards traditional methods of positive eugenics, the booklet added that the Church had contributed to the 'health of the peoples' blood' by, for example, promoting a way of 'breeding' (*Zucht*) that advanced the health of the nation by insisting on chastity and by providing a solid marital and family basis.⁶⁴ Writing on the learned defence literature, Hermann Greive had suggested that Catholic literature often asserted that race theory had its deserved place in scientific research, in an attempt to negotiate between traditional Catholic values and *völkisch* racial thinking. In the end, however, the literature would always make clear that race theory could not refute Christian truth.⁶⁵ An example of such reasoning was the attempt of the *Nathanaelfrage* to marry the Church's principle on the equality of all races with the National Socialist idea of a fixed racial hierarchy. It ultimately did not challenge the presumed racial determinants of Jews. On the contrary, it endorsed these factors in its explanation of why the Church baptized Jews:

Surely, the Church has never claimed that baptism changes the racial characteristics of a human being. The baptized Jew remains a Jew by race (*seiner Rasse nach*). However, the Church knows that every baptized man, may he come from any *Volk*, will become a new man, God's child, Christ's heir.⁶⁶

In its attempt to defend Christ's Jewishness in the face of anticlerical calls for an 'Aryan' Christ, the *Nathanaelfrage* was at first adamant about the historical roots of Christianity in Judaism and clearly rejected the idea that Jesus was an Aryan.⁶⁷ The *Nathanaelfrage* warned that Christ might have been part of the Jewish people and a Jew through his birth and adherence to Jewish customs, but this would not mean he was racially a Jew. In fact, as the booklet continued, Christ became less and less 'Jewish'. His manner (*Wesen*) his word and work, were not Jewish but divine. All his life he had stood against the Pharisees and the 'voice of [Israel's] blood and the longings of its national ambitions'.⁶⁸ The distinction between Christ and the Jewish people, and therefore between Christians and Jews, became more absolute in the *Nathanaelfrage*, not least through the use of a more racialized language:

Christianity did not take its strength from the blood, strength, the manner, the character, the art, the achievements and the culture of the Jewish people. God himself gave Christianity life and *gestalt* and features, independent from the Jewish people, yes against the Jewish people. Those who will read this booklet honestly from cover to cover will be strengthened in this knowledge afresh: if I devote myself to the faith of Jesus Christ, I will not devote myself to the affairs of the Jewish people, but the affairs of God.⁶⁹

It was simply not possible to override the anti-Semitic ideology of National Socialism with traditional arguments without running into irresolvable paradoxes. This is again apparent in yet another attempt to explain Christ's Jewish origins without declaring him a 'racial' Jew. This was often only achieved by taking refuge in divine intervention and a diffuse adoption of race rhetoric. The *Nathanaelfrage*, for instance, maintained that Christ was part of the Jewish people in a legal sense because the Jew Joseph was his father.

Christ's blood-link with the Jewish people was formed through his birth by the virgin Mary, who was engaged to Joseph ... [But] everything that was rotten in the Jewish people's blood has not ... touched him ... A wall was erected in Mary [through the immaculate conception] against the unholy bloodstream of the Jewish people.⁷⁰

Like the figure of the Jewish Bolshevik, race theory had been part of Catholic, including theological, writing before race became state ideology from 1933 (although it was far less common than anti-Bolshevism). The well-known and widely published theologian Karl Adam, for example, approved in 1933 of the National Socialist anti-Semitic policy because 'according to biological laws there is no doubt that the Jew as semite is and will remain racially alien'.⁷¹ Remarkable in the case of the *Nathanaelfrage* is, however, that this fusion of theology and *völkisch* thought had managed the transition from the small world of academic theology into a popular literature that was directly authorized by the Church hierarchy. Compared to the *Katechismuswahrheiten*, the peculiarity of the *Nathanaelfrage* is even more striking. The *Nathanaelfrage* captured the relationship between Christianity and Judaism in a decidedly more racialized discourse and the distance between Christians and Jews seemed to grow. Towards the end of the *Nathanaelfrage*, the booklet summarized the relationship between Christianity and Judaism in a way that had little in common with the initial purpose of the *Katechismuswahrheiten*: 'The root of [Judaism] is, as mentioned, the blood and kind of the Jewish people; the root of Christianity is God'.⁷²

The explanations offered by this popular defence literature on the relationship between Christianity and Judaism protected those Jewish traditions that were part of Christian history and faith, the Old Testament and with it ancient Jewry. At the same time, it consistently distanced the Catholic Church from modern Jewry as

far as Catholic tradition allowed. This classic dichotomy of 'good' and 'bad' Jews was sustained because well-known prejudices associated with modern Jewry were not only left unchallenged, but were strengthened by repetition: for example when the anti-Rosenberg publications enforced the regime's stereotype of the 'Jewish Bolshevik' and accepted the finality of racial characteristics. Most striking, however, is that National Socialist race theory was no longer rejected out of hand (criticism was reserved for 'race religion') as the Church had done since the late 1920s; this was now taken as a given category including the racial image of the Jews. This essentially abandoned the Jews to anti-Semitic vilification and persecution. Indeed, the then current Jew-hatred was only referred to in passing, but hardly criticized in this popular literature – with the exception of one passage in the *Nathanaelfrage*. This passage firmly rejected the National Socialist claim that even Christ was an anti-Semite because he had seen in the Jews Satan's offspring.⁷³

It is questionable whether these writings were able to counter anti-Semitism or foster solidarity with German Jews. They were more likely to increase the isolation of German Jewry. This isolation was acutely felt by German Jews as their non-Jewish neighbours and colleagues began to avoid 'inopportune' contacts after 1933, even though the ghettoization of the Jews was not yet been decreed from 'above'.⁷⁴ By the time the *Katechismuswahrheiten* were published in 1936, the authorities had already reversed Jewish emancipation. The 7 April 1933 decree initiated the removal and exclusion of Jews, 'non-Aryans' and the political opposition from German civil service and professional life. Ghettoization began in 1935 when Jews were increasingly denied access to public parks, beaches, theatres or restaurants. It was completed with the Nuremberg Laws in September 1935, which excluded Jews from German citizenship due to their 'race' and religion and cast them in a collective ghetto. The *Nathanaelfrage* was published before the November pogrom in 1938, but by that time the Jews' isolation and persecution was very obvious. Their official stigmatization followed from 23 July 1938 when they were forced to adopt the names 'Israel' or 'Sarah' in their personal papers and, from October, the letter 'J' in their passports.⁷⁵

Responses to the Catholic Defence Literature

It remains difficult to determine how the popular literature was received by the ordinary Catholic reader. There are only a few such responses to the *Katechismuswahrheiten* and *Nathanaelfrage* in church archives. The search for this popular voice would certainly be worthwhile in order to find out whether the Catholic public understood the (to us very limited) criticism of the regime and its anti-Semitism in this literature. Judging from the responses collected by church and state archives it seems that neither the National Socialist authorities nor anti-Jewish Catholics were much impressed by the Catholic defence literature. The authorities had little patience with the churches' differentiation between ancient and modern, or religious and 'degenerate' Jews. They consequently saw the explanations of the anti-Rosenberg

literature on the relationship between Christianity and Judaism as a challenge to anti-Semitism as a core ideology. One *Gau* press office, for example, complained that the *Kirchenzeitung* and priests in Bamberg continuously found excuses for the 'moral afflictions' of the 'Jewish church fathers' and portrayed the Jewish people as the chosen people. According to the press office, this 'pro-Judaism' was a slap in the face of every honourable German.⁷⁶ In another corner of the Reich the deputy *Gauleiter* of Schwäbisch Gmünd announced in a local newspaper in March 1935 that Rosenberg's work on religion might be his private opinion and not binding to *Volksgeossen*, but 'what he has said about *Volk* and race, race values and the race soul count as tenets of National Socialist thought. The attacks on race and blood on the parts of the Christian churches have to be reprimanded most strongly'.⁷⁷ As mentioned earlier, copies of the *Katechismuswahrheiten* were confiscated by the Gestapo for the same reason, because they were seen to 'glorify the Jewish race'.⁷⁸

The few responses from Catholic citizens to the *Katechismuswahrheiten* that survive in the archives confirm, however, the bishops' observation that believing National Socialists made scarcely faithful Catholics. The responses suggest that the defence literature could not reach those Catholics the bishops wanted to reach. Referring to the *Katechismuswahrheiten*, Theo G. from Rösrath near Cologne, for instance, was indignant that salvation should come from the Jews:

Our daily experience, our best teacher, tells us the opposite. The Jew is the leader of Bolshevism, he brings death, horror, desperation, etc. see Spain. ... Have the Jews not themselves called out: Your blood may come over our children and us! ... If you [the Church] continue like this ... everyone who thinks he should stand up for you will say: this is a waste of time ... It is truly without value that you should give your support to the Hebrew.⁷⁹

Religious prejudices against Jews had apparently not lost their credence even if religion itself did no longer command much authority in the lives of these Catholics. Neither had the more 'scientific' racial anti-Semitism of National Socialism managed to supersede these old prejudices, and certainly not the fear of the 'Jewish Bolshevik' so prevalent even in Weimar Germany.

Conclusion

The popular Catholic defence against Rosenberg acknowledged the importance of ancient Jewry to Christian theology and their religious superiority to their heathen neighbours as they preserved monotheism and divine revelation. It also acknowledged the historical Jewish roots of Christianity and Christ's Jewish origin more readily and vehemently than most statements of the Lutheran church.⁸⁰ Race, according to this defence literature, would never surpass divine Christian teaching.⁸¹ Still, this did not amount to a rejection of Rosenberg's anti-Semitism nor the regime's anti-Semitic policies. Much less was it a defence of Germany's Jews. Images of Jews, particularly

in the popular literature, were almost always negative. Even passages that criticized aspects of National Socialism, as, for example, explanations on the advantages and disadvantages of race science, seem too subtle to break through the ambivalence of the argument.

Yet the defence against Rosenberg was equally no Machiavellian attempt to capitalize on the National Socialist revolution by strengthening the churches' case with the average German.⁸² The documents on the production of the *Katechismuswahrheiten* and *Nathanaelfrage* show instead that these booklets were primarily meant as self-defence against an encroaching anticlerical National Socialist ideology as well as an attempt to bind Catholics to the community's traditional values and tear them away from 'neo-paganism' and an anti-Semitism that undermined Christianity. Focused on the defence of Catholic doctrine, they had only very limited scope to defend Jews and reject anti-Semitism, even if the historical literature would prefer to see them this way.

Yet the motive primarily to protect Catholicism's own tradition does not explain why such a defence should perpetuate a negative portrait of modern Jewry where the image was more secular and populist than it had been in the well-known learned literature and in religious publications of the Weimar Republic. Why these contemporary images of Jews appear in this decidedly religious context (both in content but also in its proximity to the hierarchy) is to a greater part due to Catholic anti-Jewish traditions and to some extent due to the dictatorial straightjacket of the Third Reich. References to the Jews' deicide and their hostility to Christianity are part of a long Christian tradition and are neither particularly Catholic nor German. The secular anti-Jewish stereotypes, the Jew as usurer and Bolshevik, had likewise been part of Catholic (and Protestant) anti-Jewish sentiments before anti-Semitism became state ideology in Germany. Individual topics of *völkisch* thought, especially the concern over the integrity of the national community (*Volksgemeinschaft*) and an awareness of the importance of race characteristics, had also been part of the public discourse in Weimar and continued to be so. These images were not a strategic adaptation to the expectations of an anti-Semitic dictatorship, but were part of a trusted worldview that had long been present in Catholic publications.

However, the adoption of a rhetoric close to National Socialist thought cannot necessarily be attributed to these anti-Jewish traditions alone, neither can the inclusion of these contemporary images of Jews in publications close to the hierarchy. This occurred only rarely outside a dictatorial system, for example, in Weimar Germany or the Catholic hierarchy of England and Wales. Catholic religious publications there, for example, contained far fewer negative references to modern Jewry and hardly any emphasis on their racial distinction. The format and language of the popular defence literature depended on two further, external factors: the bishops' mistrust of the loyalty of Catholics to their Church and faith, and the structural restrictions imposed on the communication channels of German Catholicism by a dictatorial regime. As the bishops believed that Catholics had become susceptible to anticlerical claims, the

popular religious literature took into account themes from the public discourse at the time, for example, Catholic loyalty to the fatherland or the debate about an 'Aryan' Christ. The booklets addressed key issues in a language the intended readership was assumed to understand instantly. In addition, interruptions and destruction of the traditional communication channels led to the inclusion of secular themes, race and modern anti-Semitism, into religious publications endorsed by the Church hierarchy. The bishops had assumed these were protected through the Concordat that guarded diocesan publications.

In the time that passed between the publication of the *Katechismuswahrheiten* and the *Nathanaelfrage*, the struggle between the Vatican and the anticlericalism of Hitler's Germany climaxed in the publication of the papal encyclical *Mit brennender Sorge* in March 1937.⁸³ The encyclical was a 'diplomatic compromise' that sought to criticize the numerous violations of the Concordat without provoking Hitler to revoke this legal commitment. Yet it was also a strong condemnation of the contemporary idolatry of race, without the ambivalent twists of the two popular booklets. Furthermore, and in stark contrast to the *Nathanaelfrage*, the encyclical rejected the use of religious language in a context of race, blood and *Volks*.⁸⁴ The examples of the *Katechismuswahrheiten* and *Nathanaelfrage* have shown that the boundaries between religious anti-Jewish images and modern anti-Semitism hardly existed once Catholic religious doctrine had to be explained to the secular world. The author of the booklets as well as the bishops had no qualms about including claims about 'Jewish Bolshevism' or the Jews' racial difference in this religious education. It seems as if anti-Jewish sentiments that had been known to Catholic discourse for decades were brought down to the lowest common denominator under the oppressive conditions of the National Socialist dictatorship.

Notes

1. Raimund Baumgärtner, *Weltanschauungskampf im Dritten Reich. Die Auseinandersetzung der Kirchen mit Alfred Rosenberg* (Mainz 1977), 190–1.
2. Ibid., 192. Gerhard Besier argues that the Vatican was an authoritarian structure that held totalitarian ambitions, too, albeit primarily in the religious sphere. Gerhard Besier, *Der Heilige Stuhl und Hitler-Deutschland. Die Faszination des Totalitären* (Munich 2004), 313.
3. Quotes taken from Richard Steigmann-Gall, 'Rethinking Nazism and Religion: How Anti-Christian were the "Pagans"?', *Central European History*, Vol. 36 (2003), 75–105, 88–9. Steigmann-Gall argues that Rosenberg was not anti-Christian, but anticlerical. He aimed not for an abolition of Christianity but wanted a radical version of Protestant Christianity (90–1). On a brief summary of the *Myth* and its origins see Reinhard Bollmus, *Das Amt Rosenberg und seine Gegner. Studien zum Machtkampf im Nationalsozialistischen Herrschaftssystem* (Stuttgart 1970), 17–25.
4. Michael Phayer, *The Catholic Church and the Holocaust, 1930–1965* (Bloomington 2000), 74. Burkhard van Schewick, 'Katholische Kirche und nationalsozialistische Rassenpolitik', in Klaus Gotto and Konrad Repgen (eds) *Die Katholiken und das Dritte Reich* (Mainz 1989, 2nd edn), 101–22. See also Besier on the kind of criticism Nuncio Orsenigo found permissible. Besier, op. cit., 201–2.

5. On Catholic anti-Semitism see Beth Griech-Polelle, *Bishop von Galen. German Catholicism and National Socialism* (New Haven 2002), 52–3; John Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope* (Harmondsworth 1999), 121–3; David Kertzer, *Unholy War: The Vatican's Role in the Rise of Modern Antisemitism* (London 2002), 264–93. For literature that takes the structural restrictions of a dictatorship into account see Phayer, op. cit.; Klaus Scholder, 'Political Resistance or Self-assertion as a Problem for Church Governments', in essays by Klaus Scholder, *A Requiem for Hitler and other New Perspectives on the German Church Struggle* (London 1989), 130–9, 131. In defence of the Church's strategy in Germany see van Schewick, op. cit., 120.
6. Archdiocesan Archive Cologne (EAK), Josef Teusch Werke, *Katechismuswahrheiten*. Also Klemens-August Recker, 'Wem wollt ihr glauben?' *Bischof Berning im Dritten Reich* (Paderborn 1998), 250. Wilhelm Damberg, 'Katholizismus und Antisemitismus in Westfalen. Ein Desiderat', in Arno Herzig et al. (eds) *Verdrängung und Vernichtung der Juden in Westfalen* (Münster 1994). For a very critical account see Stephen Haynes, 'Who Needs Enemies? Jews and Judaism in Anti-Nazi Religious Discourse', *Church History*, Vol. 71 (2002), 341–69.
7. Klaus Scholder, 'Judaism and Christianity in the Ideology and Politics of National Socialism', in Otto Dov Kulka and Paul Mendes-Flohr (eds) *Judaism and Christianity under the Impact of National Socialism* (Jerusalem 1987), 183–95, 193.
8. Otto Dov Kulka, 'Popular Christian Attitudes in the Third Reich to National Socialist Policies towards the Jews', in Kulka and Mendes-Flohr, op. cit., 251–67, 255. Uriel Tal, 'Aspects of Consecration of Politics in the Nazi Era', in Kulka and Mendes-Flohr, op. cit., 63–95, 83. Referring to the Protestant churches see Uriel Tal, 'On Modern Lutheranism and the Jews', *Year Book of the Leo Baeck Institute* (London 1985), 203–13.
9. Hermann Greive, *Theologie und Ideologie. Katholizismus und Judentum in Deutschland und Österreich 1918–1933* (Heidelberg 1969), 193. Haynes, op. cit., 341. Doris Bergen, 'Catholics, Protestants, and Christian Antisemitism in Nazi Germany', *Central European History*, Vol. 27 (1994), 329–48, 329.
10. Donald Dietrich, 'Antisemitism and the Institutional Church', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, Vol. 16 (2002), 415–26, 425. Phayer, op. cit., 222–5. Besier, op. cit., 239–48. Michael O'Sullivan, 'An eroding milieu? Catholic Youth, Church Authority, and Popular Behaviour in Northwest Germany during the Third Reich, 1933–1938', *Catholic Historical Review*, Vol. 90 (2004), 236–59, 258. See also Thomas Breuer, *Verordneter Wandel? Der Widerstreit zwischen nationalsozialistischem Herrschaftsanspruch und traditionaler Lebenswelt im Erzbistum Bamberg* (Mainz 1992).
11. Olaf Blaschke, 'Die "Reichspogromnacht" und die Haltung von katholischer Bevölkerung und Kirche', *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte*, Vol. 52 (2000), 47–74. Also Olaf Blaschke, *Katholizismus und Antisemitismus im Deutschen Kaiserreich*, (Göttingen 1997).
12. Margaret Lavinia Anderson, 'From Syllabus to Shoa?', *Central European History*, Vol. 34 (2001), 231–38, 234–37.
13. Karl Schwarzmann, *Die Nathanaelfrage unserer Tage* (Imprimatur Cologne 4 June 1938). The title refers to Nathanael's response to Philippus' news that he had met Christ: 'Can anything good come from Palestine?' EAK, Gen. II 8.4, 1a.
14. Baumgärtner, op. cit., 161.
15. Report on *Katechismuswahrheiten*, EAK, Gen. 22.13, 4. Greive set the circulation at seven million. Greive, op. cit., 200. The most widely distributed work, *Studies on The Myth of the Twentieth Century*, reached a print run of approximately 220,000 in 1934. Baumgärtner, op. cit., 195.
16. Ludwig Volk and Bernhard Stasiewski (eds) *Akten deutscher Bischöfe über die Lage der Kirche 1933–1945*, (Mainz 1968–85), 6 vols, I, 611. The bureau gathered anticlerical propaganda and devised defence literature accordingly, printed and distributed it. Baumgärtner, op. cit., 149, 154.
17. Baumgärtner, op. cit., 155.

18. EAK Gen. 22.13, 4.
19. Leaflet, 'Die Verwertung der Katechismuswahrheiten', and letter, Cologne Generalvikariat, September 1936, both in EAK, Gen. 22.13, 4.
20. Rosenberg's institutional power was weak. His office was small with a minuscule budget and its mission to shape education and worldview within the Reich was severely hampered by intra-party competition. His main literary work, *The Myth of the Twentieth Century*, achieved a circulation of 1,030,000 in 1942, yet Rosenberg's work failed to influence contemporary scientific literature. Generally on Rosenberg's institutional weakness within the power structure of the regime see Bollmus, op. cit., 26, 114, 124–40. Baumgärtner, op. cit., 82. Steigmann-Gall, op. cit., 81, 86. Uriel Tal: 'Aspects of Consecration', 83.
21. Bollmus, op. cit., 113–18.
22. As quoted in Robert Wistrich, *Who's Who in Nazi Germany*, (London 1995), 211.
23. Ernst Piper, *Alfred Rosenberg: Hitlers Chefideologe* (Munich, 2005), 15–17.
24. Piper, op. cit., 11–13.
25. Baumgärtner, op. cit., 124–7. Göring supported Rosenberg's project of a Hohe Schule, a university solely devoted to teaching National Socialist ideology, with 1.5 million Reich Marks per year. Nevertheless, the great breakthrough for Rosenberg's office was only achieved from 1941, when its public presence in ideological training increased significantly. In early 1943, after Stalingrad, Rosenberg was eventually given the task of providing training for army officers. Bollmus, op. cit., 130, 134–40.
26. EAK Gen. 22.3b, 1.
27. On Rosenberg and the competition between his office and the Sicherheitsdienst (SD) as well as occasional cooperation of the two see Wolfgang Dierker, 'Himmlers Glaubenskrieger. Der Sicherheitsdienst des SS, seine Religionspolitik und die "Politische Religion" des Nationalsozialismus', *Historisches Jahrbuch*, Vol. 122 (2002), 321–44.
28. Ludwig Volk, 'Die Fuldaer Bischofskonferenz von Hitlers Machtergreifung bis zur Enzyklika "Mit brennender Sorge"', *Stimme der Zeit*, Vol. 183 (1969), 10–31, 19.
29. For information on the gradual repression of the Catholic Church during the Third Reich see Klaus Hürten, *Kleine Geschichte des deutschen Katholizismus 1800–1960* (Mainz 1986), 222–9. Christoph Kösters, '"Fest soll mein Taufbund immer steh'n" – Demonstrationskatholizismus im Bistum Münster 1933–1945', in Hans-Ulrich Thamer and Rudolf Schloegl (eds) *Zwischen Loyalität und Resistenz* (Münster 1996), 158–84. Barbara Stambolis, 'Wallfahrtsfrühling im Dritten Reich: Überlegungen zu Religiosität und Resistenz unter dem Nationalsozialismus', in Ludger Grevelhorster (ed.) *Religion und Gesellschaft im Deutschland des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts* (Vierow bei Greifswald 1995), 159–70. Catholic citizens continued to urge their religious leadership to adopt a stronger stance against the regime's anticlericalism even four years later, at a time when the bishops had already retreated to an exclusively religious resistance. EAK, Gen. 22.3b, 1.
30. Conference (5–7 June 1934, Fulda) notes as cited in Stasiewski, op. cit., 695, 701. For a detailed account of the diplomatic exchanges between the Church hierarchy and the government see Baumgärtner, op. cit.
31. On the Vatican's strategy against Rosenberg see Dominik Burkhard, *Häresie und Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts. Rosenbergs nationalsozialistische Weltanschauung vor dem Tribunal der Römischen Inquisition* (Paderborn 2005).
32. Steigmann-Gall refers to the 20 July 1935 Heydrich memorandum. Steigmann-Gall, op. cit., 92. See also Tal: 'Aspects of Consecration', 83.
33. On the main stages of the Church's struggle with the state see John Conway, *The Nazi Persecution of the Churches 1933–45* (London 1968), 95–116, 140–232. Hürten, op. cit., 212–27. Klaus Scholder, 'Politics and Church Politics in the Third Reich. The Shift in Church Politics

- in Germany, 1936–37', in essays by Klaus Scholder, op. cit., 140–56, 145. Heike Kreutzer, *Das Reichskirchenministerium im Gefüge der nationalsozialistischen Herrschaft* (Düsseldorf 2000).
34. O'Sullivan, op. cit., 258. According to O'Sullivan, the bishops sought this spiritual defence because they feared they could not control the behaviour of their mobilized followers whose celebrations threatened the Church's strategy of legal opposition (244). Gotto, Hockert and Repgen on the other hand suggested that by 1936 the bishops were convinced that National Socialism strove to extinguish Christianity in Germany. They consequently adopted a broad spiritual defence to nurture and inculcate the faith of those Catholics still close to the Church. Klaus Gotto, Hans Günter Hockert and Konrad Repgen, 'Nationalsozialistische Herausforderung und kirchliche Antwort. Eine Bilanz', in Klaus Gotto and Konrad Repgen (eds) *Die Katholiken und das Dritte Reich* (Mainz 1983, 2nd edn), 122–39. One should consider that Hitler and the National Socialist state were still undecided about the future of the Christian churches at that time and that the physical threat to the Church's institutions and teaching really only intensified after 1941.
 35. Baumgärtner, op. cit., 195.
 36. See letter from the Archdiocese Munich-Freising reporting that the second edition of August Pieper's *Ludendorff und die Heilige Schrift* has had to be reduced to 2000 issues after an impressive first print run of 50,000. A third edition was uncertain, 5 January 1937. Munich to all other dioceses. EAK Gen. 22.13, 3. Even the distribution of the bishops' own publications, as for instance Cardinal Faulhaber's 1933 Advent sermons, were not safe from such interruptions. Baumgärtner, op. cit., 195.
 37. Letter to Reich Ministry of Church Affairs, 23 November 1936, EAK Gen. 22.13, 4.
 38. Letter from Bertram to Kerrl (Minister of Church Affairs) and Geheime Staatspolizeiamt, 20 March 1937; Ludwig Volk, *Akten deutscher Bischöfe über die Lage der Kirche 1933–45, IV (1936–39)* (Mainz 1981), 184–6; also letter from Berning to Goebbels, 3 September 1937; Volk, op. cit., 345.
 39. Volk, op. cit., footnote 8, 425.
 40. 'Die Verwertung der *Katechismuswahrheiten*', in EAK Gen. 22.13, 4. Josef Teusch wrote both booklets, although the *Nathanaelfrage* appeared under the pseudonym of Karl Schwarzmann. Ulrich von Hehl, *Katholische Kirche und Nationalsozialismus im Erzbistum Köln 1933–1945* (Mainz 1977), 254.
 41. *Katechismuswahrheiten*, 14. This as well as all the subsequent quotes taken from the two booklets or the German language literature are the author's translations.
 42. Introduction to EAK file Josef Teusch Werke. Also Recker, op. cit., 250. The biographer of Cardinal Clemens von Galen, Jürgen Korupka, recently referred to the *Nathanaelfrage* as one of those publications with which von Galen intended to counter anti-Semitism (<http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/tagungsberichte/id=1099>). Hermann Greive briefly comments on the *Katechismuswahrheiten* and remarked that it stressed the Jews' collective guilt in the crucifixion of Christ. Greive, op. cit., 200–1.
 43. Letter from Generalvikariat Cologne to all parishes, 18 June 1938. EAK, Gen. II 8.4, 1a.
 44. Ibid.
 45. Ibid.
 46. *Nathanaelfrage*, 3.
 47. Catholic newspapers in England portrayed Faulhaber's sermons and speeches on National Socialism as examples of Catholic opposition to the regime, e.g. *Catholic Times*, 1 February 1935 and 11 November 1938.
 48. *Amici Israel* was not a mere mission to the Jews. Together with their supporters amongst the Catholic bishops and curia they (unsuccessfully) petitioned the Vatican to rid the Good Friday prayers of its anti-Jewish text. Hubert Wolf, "'Pro perfidies Judaeis'. Die "Amici Israel" und ihr Antrag auf eine Reform der Karfreitagsurbitte für die Juden (1928). Oder: Bemerkungen zum

- Thema katholische Kirche und Antisemitismus', *Historische Zeitschrift*, Vol. 279 (2004), 611–58, 621.
49. On Faulhaber's alleged anti-Semitism, Phayer considers that the claim that Faulhaber sanctioned Nazi racism in his three-hour discussion with Hitler in 1936 (Friedländer: *Nazi Germany and the Jews: The Years of Persecution* (New York 1997), 47–8) seems unlikely given Faulhaber's consistent condemnation of racism. It is possible, however, that as an anti-Bolshevist, he agreed that there was a link between Jews and Bolshevism. Phayer, op. cit., 15–17.
50. Michael Faulhaber, *Judentum, Christentum, Germanentum. Adventspredigten* (Munich 1934), 10–11.
51. Ibid., 116. Also quoted in Greive, op. cit., 203. Greive however did not refer to the restrictions Faulhaber placed on race science and saw in this sermon an uncritical endorsement of race science.
52. 'Verwertung der *Katechismuswahrheiten*' in a letter from Schulte to Bertram, 15 September 1936. Volk, *Akten IV* op. cit., 50–1.
53. 'Beibruf zu den *Katechismuswahrheiten*', 15 September 1936. EAK, Gen. 22.13, 4.
54. This phrase was either in bold print or followed by 'memorize'. See copy of *Katechismuswahrheiten*, EAK, Gen. 22.12 v.1, and pamphlet Josef Teusch, *Predigten zu den Katechismuswahrheiten*, published by Bischöfliche Hauptarbeitsstelle Düsseldorf (no date).
55. Josef Teusch, op. cit.
56. *Katechismuswahrheiten*, 9.
57. Ibid., 12.
58. Ibid., 13.
59. Protocol of the bishops' conference of the Western dioceses at Kevelaer, 9–10 November 1936. Volk, *Akten IV*, 35–42, 40.
60. Phayer, op. cit., 9–17.
61. Bertram to German bishops, 31 March 1933 (date received in Archdiocese of Freiburg) in Stasiewski, op. cit., footnote 3, 42–3.
62. Ludwig Volk, *Der bayerische Episkopat und der Nationalsozialismus 1930–1934* (Mainz 1965), 77.
63. *Kathechismuswahrheiten*, 8.
64. *Nathanaelfrage*, 25.
65. Greive, op. cit., 133.
66. *Nathanaelfrage*, 24. EAK, Gen. II 8.4, 1a.
67. *Nathanaelfrage*, 5.
68. Ibid., 15–16.
69. Ibid., 4.
70. Ibid., 5–6, pp. 15–16. EAK, Gen. II 8.4, 1a. Archbishop Gröber of Freiburg picked up this argument when he explained how Christ was linked to the Jewish people. The link, according to Gröber, existed in his mother and before the law, but as he had no worldly father he was essentially of supernatural origin. Gröber's Lent pastoral letter, 8 February 1939, in *Anzeigblatt für die Erzdiözese Freiburg*, February 1939.
71. Karl Adam, 'Deutsche Volkstum und katholisches Christentum', *Theologische Quartalschrift* Vol. CXIV (1933), quoted in Greive, op. cit., 180. On Karl Adam see Robert Krieg, *Catholic Theologians in Nazi Germany* (New York and London 2004), 83–107.
72. *Nathanaelfrage*, 21.
73. See, e.g., *Der Stürmer*, no 12, March 1936.
74. For a good summary of the growing social isolation of German Jews from Weimar to National Socialist Germany, and the anti-Jewish measures emanating from popular ambitions see Frank Bajohr, 'Vom antijüdischen Konsens zum schlechten Gewissen. Die deutsche Gesellschaft und die Judenverfolgung 1933–1945', in Frank Bajohr, *Dieter Pohl, Der Holocaust als offenes Geheimnis*.

- Die Deutschen, die NS-Führung und die Alliierten* (Munich 2006).
75. Bernd Jürgen Wendt, *Deutschland 1933–1945. Das 'Dritte Reich'. Handbuch zur Geschichte* (Hanover 1995), 160–79.
 76. Letter from Gau Press Office to Landesstelle Ostmark of the Reich Ministry for Education and Propaganda, Bayreuth, 19 February 1937. BA NS15/737 Censorship of confessional journals.
 77. Printed in *Stuttgarter Nationalsozialistischer Kurier*, 28 March 1935. Rosenberg's office had this announcement distributed through its press agency. BA NS15/145a.
 78. See note 38.
 79. Letter from Theo Gunnemann, Rösrath, 2 December 1936, to Generalvikariat Cologne. For responses to the *Katechismuswahrheiten* see EAK, Gen. 22.13, 4.
 80. The discussion about the 'Aryan' origin of Christ primarily ensued within the Protestant churches. The Synod of the Prussian Church introduced an 'Aryan' paragraph that excluded 'racial' Jews from membership, as early as 5 September 1933. Scholder, 'Judaism and Christianity', op. cit., 191.
 81. According to Dov Kulka Catholic priests also practised what they preached and continued to support Jews who had converted to Christianity and to baptize Jews although this was forbidden. Dov Kulka, 'Popular Christian Attitudes, 255.
 82. Haynes, op. cit., 343, 346.
 83. Ludwig Volk, 'Die Enzyklika "Mit brennender Sorge"'. Zum hundertsten Geburtstag Kardinal Michael v. Faulhabers am 5. März 1969', *Stimmen der Zeit*, Vol. 183 (1969), 174–94, 190.
 84. Besier, op. cit., 264–67.

ULRIKE EHRET is a research fellow at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg and honorary research fellow at the Centre for European Studies (UCL). Her doctoral research (University of London, 2006) was on Catholics and anti-Semitism in interwar Germany and England, and her current research interests include social stereotyping, religious and national identification, political extremism and lives under dictatorships.